

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE**  
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:**

Monday, August 01, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
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## Liberia wants Taylor exile review

**Liberia's transitional government has asked Nigeria to review the conditions under which former Liberian President Charles Taylor is granted asylum.**



A lay preacher, Charles Taylor was educated in the US

The government joined neighbours Sierra Leone and Guinea in calling for Nigeria to consider whether he has breached the terms of his asylum in Nigeria.

He is alleged to have been involved in a plot to kill the president of Guinea, and of meddling in Liberian affairs.

Mr Taylor left Liberia in 2003, ending years of bloody civil war.

He faces a string of war crimes charges for his alleged role in a decade-long civil war in neighbouring Sierra Leone.

Armies linked to Mr Taylor were accused of fomenting unrest amid a scramble for the country's valuable diamond resources.

### Communique

"We will ask Nigeria to lift the immunity that is keeping Charles Taylor under Nigerian government protection," the leaders of the three west African states said in a communique.

Liberia's transitional chairman Gyude Bryant joined Sierra Leone's President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and Guinea's Prime Minister Cellou Diallo in labelling Mr Taylor as a threat to peace in the region.

The leaders spoke out against allowing a culture of impunity to flourish in the west African countries, which make up an informal alliance called the Mano River Union.

Nigeria's President Olusegun Obasanjo has resisted previous calls for Mr Taylor to face trial within Nigeria, complaining of "harassment and blackmail" being used in an effort to bring charges against him.

Date: July 28, 2005  
For immediate release

## **WAR CRIMES IN WEST AFRICA**

Partnership Africa Canada renews its call for the immediate handover of former Liberian President Charles Taylor

With the October 11, 2005 Liberian presidential and legislative elections less than three-months away, Partnership Africa Canada today renewed its call for the immediate handover of former Liberian President Charles Taylor from Nigeria to the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone to stand trial for war crimes.

On June 4, 2003 the Special Court for Sierra Leone announced that Liberian President Charles Taylor had been indicted for "bearing the greatest responsibility for war crimes, crimes against humanity and serious violations of international humanitarian law" in the Sierra Leone conflict, where at least 50,000 people died. A few months later, Taylor was forced out of power and left for exile in Nigeria, in an internationally brokered deal.

Today, Taylor's shadow hangs over the forthcoming Liberian elections like a shroud. After leading a bloody rebel war in Liberia in the 1990s, he was elected President in 1997 - "at the barrel of the gun". Many Liberians saw those elections as a choice between electing Taylor, or facing continuing war. In the end, they got both. The war in Liberia continued and intensified and President Taylor extended his campaign of terror to Sierra Leone, where diamonds were his booty of choice.

United Nations special envoy to Liberia, Jacques Klein said of then President Charles Taylor in August 2003: "He's a psychopathic killer." Taylor's chilling last words on leaving Liberia for exile in Nigeria on August 10, 2003 were: "God willing, I will be back." Many have called for his handover, but Nigeria has so far declined to comply with international demands led by the European Union and, more recently, by members of the US Congress. On July 15, 2005, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, demanded Taylor's immediate transfer to the Special Court, saying that it was now time for "justice to follow its course".

According to the UN Secretary General's June 2005 report to the UN Security Council, "Former President Charles Taylor is reportedly in regular contact with his former business, military and political associates in Liberia and is suspected of sponsoring a variety of presidential candidates with a view to ensuring that the next Liberian Government will include his sympathizers." In early July 2005, the Liberian Ministry of Justice issued a statement protesting the continuing "interference in Liberian politics" of Taylor, in violation of his exile in Nigeria.

"Nigeria has no legal or moral obligation to continue to give refuge to this war criminal," said Bernard Taylor, Executive Director of Partnership Africa Canada, today. "The future of Liberia and West Africa is at stake. Taylor must be handed over for trial before the Liberian elections," he said.

Election 2007

THE PRESIDENTIAL AND PARLIAMENTARY RACE BY PHILIP NEVILLE

# ...Throwing spanners into the political works

The Presidential Elections scheduled for 2007 is attracting many political players from each political party, an indication that every party wants to occupy not only the driver's seat of the nation, but subsequently want to be in charge of the governance of the state.

But despite the influx, it is undisputable that the president will come from one of the two most prominent political parties (APC & SLPP). There is equally every likelihood that the coalition group would make a big and significant impact depending on who the leader will be and the composition of its members.

Nobody knows who the leader will be nor the entire make-up of the party. What is being signaled around is that there is a coalition of political parties in the making but who to head and what it would make-up is not known to the populace at this material time; that is why it would be in the best interest of the two major political parties to put their houses in a proper shape.

Meanwhile there have been recent developments within the two political parties, which send the wrong signal and put the voters in a state of political dilemma.

The recent undertaking of the detained war crime indictee Chief Sam Hinga Norman should not be treated with levity for various reasons.

Firstly lets examine the possibility and the right of the detainee to file in a motion at the Supreme Court demanding for an injunction to the proposed party convention.

The next premise is whether or not Hinga Norman is a Sierra Leonean and a member of the SLPP, having stated the above, an examination into both of them stands out.

Hinga Norman is a detainee for crimes against humanity, being very serious charges that can even cost him his life depending on the jurisdiction and the laws that obtain there. That notwithstanding his right to seek redress in any court to which he is the citizen of that country is acceptable. His right to the due process of law is paramount just the same was the freedom of any human being should not be tampered with. It is only excusable in certain circumstances when the freedom of an individual is restricted and is being accepted. Such a situation could be considered for security reasons when the life of the individual is threatened.

There are other reasons, which this writer would not go into for now.

In the case of Hinga Norman his freedom has been restricted, but his right to fair trial under the law has not been restricted. Therefore the right to go through the court for an injunction is appropriate

because he has been indicted in a case that he has not been found guilty of as yet.

Furthermore, Hinga Norman is a Sierra Leonean like any other Sierra Leonean and apart from being a Sierra Leonean he is a member of a registered political party in the country.

He himself is a registered member, which gives him the right to checkmate activities he considers not proper which may cause the disintegration and disunity of the party. So for other members of the party as well as observes perception of Norman as a trouble maker is a complete wrong assessment vis-à-vis the reasons stated above.

The next scenario is will the Supreme Court grant an injunction to Norman? The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land next to the parliament, and one of its functions is to interpret constitutional matters, which Hinga Norman has brought to the attention of the court.

Though the Supreme Court cannot grant him a permanent injunction, as that cannot suffice in law, a temporal injunction can be granted while the merit of the matter is being looked into.

The High Court which is the lower court to the Supreme Court few months back granted a temporal injunction to a group of APC members who felt that the APC constitution had been tampered with. Similar matter was filed at the Supreme Court where judges of that court sat down and judiciously looked into the matter. It is expected that the same measure could be adopted.

This is no doubt another test case for the judiciary and it is the assumption of some sections of the public that the Supreme Court would not treat the matter with any level of seriousness. The reasons are that the SLPP is the government in power and has control of the judiciary and other sectors of the country's economy. Therefore, the government can dictate the course of justice and at the Supreme Court, "you can't bite the finger that feeds you." This has been the argument and conclusion of most people. It is now left with the Supreme Court to prove them right or wrong.

After wards, did the APC not go to the Supreme Court on similar matter? How was it decided?

This is a question of sit and wait because already, a precedent has been set and when this precedent is deviated from by the Supreme Court, then the people will come to the conclusion that the Supreme Court is bias, partial and not inde-



Chief Hinga Norman...where are you?

pendent which is a contradiction of the principle of "the rule of law".

It is John Locke, British Political Philosopher who advanced the theory of separation of powers. The belief was that the concept would promote apart from democracy, the independence of the vari-

*"But President Kabbah would not; instead, it would allow the situation to degenerate to the lowest and could describe it as democracy"*

ous arms of government, which are the executive, the legislation and the judiciary.

The separation of powers according to Locke aims at the effectiveness of the rule of law, checkmate the excesses of each of the arm of government and above all abuse of power. So when the judiciary allows the executive to take full control of its function, its independence would be compromised and then justice would suffer major setback not only to the ordinary man on the street but even to the bidders. This could see the highest bidder all the time stealing the show or getting justice over the non-bidder, then the rationale for the establishment of the judiciary would not worth it at all.

The case of Hinga Norman versus the SLPP vis-à-vis the govern-

ment of President Kabbah should open the eyes of every Sierra Leonean. That of the APC is over with a remarkable and historical judgment delivered by Justice Abel Stronge.

The decision of the Supreme Court regarding this matter has the potential to unite or destroy the SLPP, that is why it should not be treated with the back of the hand and it would be in the best interest of President Kabbah to keep a respectable and reasonable distance from the beginning to the end of the trial.

Everyday the leadership of the SLPP is attracting a lot of people. Initially it was Solomon Bereva and Charles Margai but as time went by more people jumped into the wagon. Julius Maada Bio was the third person and more names have been added to the list.

Last Saturday it was former Sierra Leone's Ambassador to the United States of America Ernest John Leigh who announced his intention to contest the party leadership. Two Saturdays ago it was Dr. Lansana Nyallah from the United States again. Prior to that the Finance Minister J.B. Dauda came up with the same thirst and more are expected to announce few days to the convention.

With all these aspirants demonstrating interest for the leadership of the party tells that something is wrong within the party and if not handle cautiously would end up tearing the party apart. Perhaps that is the objective the president is trying to achieve if not he would have sorted it out long ago, as the current leader of the party and president of this nation. But I always look at President Kabbah as somebody who has little or no love for this country, and has always

taken the people for a ride. He left the country for some twenty or more years and on his arrival he was approached by some party members to become their leader, an idea that he initially rejected on the basis that his reason for coming home was to retire and enjoy his retirement benefit from the United Nations.

Later, after some lobbying by party members he accepted it and has since enjoyed both the leadership of the party and the presidency of the country than anyone, and his ambition is to continue enjoying it even when he shall have retired.

Coming back to the internal leadership wrangling within the party, should have been the concern of the party leader to find an amicable solution to it.

But President Kabbah would not; instead, it would allow the situation to degenerate to the lowest and could describe it as democracy. It is true that it is the democratic rights of all the aspirants, firstly to test their popularity and secondly to see whether or not the electorate can buy their messages. But unfortunately it has to start with the primaries which is the convention scheduled to take place in Makeni. It is democracy, so the president is right to allow each of the aspirants for leadership of the party to take part in the struggle, but he should not be seen to either worsen or aggravate it by shaping and manipulating the process. Let it be done smoothly so that the looser would embrace the winner and congratulate him/her but when the president is suspected by the people of taking sides on the basis of his personal security than the conclusion of the people about him would be obvious.

If Ahmed Tejan Kabbah got the presidency on a platter of gold he should not expect his successor to equally have a smooth sail. This could be due to several reasons among which, not much was known about him, and secondly the party was in dire need of a leader at the time and not many of those clamouring for the leadership today were recognized for that position. But this time round the situation is absolutely different that is why as leader of the SLPP and president of Sierra Leone he should provide a level playing field for them in order to get a fine successor that would be appreciated by the people of this country.

One would notice that the action of President Kabbah provoked that of Hinga Norman to react. The unfortunate thing about it is that he went to the Supreme Court where he thinks he may obtain justice.

Africa News

July 26, 2005 Tuesday

## **Countries Face 'Serious' Human Rights Issues - UN Rights Chief**

UN News Service

With war-torn West Africa still facing "very serious" human rights issues and tensions, the United Nations top rights official today voiced concern for deteriorating human rights in Cote d'Ivoire, fading protections for women in Sierra Leone, and the "profoundly inadequate" justice system in Liberia.

At a press conference marking her one-year anniversary as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour also renewed her call to African leaders to ensure that former Liberian President Charles Taylor - now living in exile in Nigeria - surrendered to the jurisdiction of the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, where he has been charged "bearing the greatest responsibility" for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed at the height of that country's brutal 10-year civil war.

"Justice, I think, screams to be done both in Liberia and in Sierra Leone," she said, adding that there was no reason for a valid legal process not to follow its course. "This man has been indicted by a mixed international and national court and, in my view, whether or not there is satisfactory evidence that he is breaching the terms of his exile, the time has come for him to stand trial and the international community should say so with no ambivalence."

Ms. Arbour recapped her 10-day trip to the West African region where she surveyed the efforts being made to build effective systems for protecting human rights in post-conflict countries. She also met with the human rights officials attached to the UN peacekeeping missions in Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, and in Liberia.

While poised for presidential elections this fall, Cote d'Ivoire faced serious human rights issues, Ms. Arbour said, highlighting the recent massacres in Gitrozon and Duekoue, and the fact that rebel-held areas in the divided country were "virtually lawless." In the Government-controlled areas, there was serious concern of the militarization of governance.

She said that, after visiting Gitrozon and Duekoue, it was obvious that people living in the region were terrorized and not forthcoming. She called for full accountability for the events that took place there last month.

Turning to Sierra Leone, Ms Arbour said that although the truth and reconciliation commissions dealing with the aftermath of the country's bloody, decade-long civil war had completed their work, there was still among the people a very broad-based sense of marginalization and exclusion - not negligible factors and very much at the heart of the

conflict in the first place. Before a stable and just peace could be achieved, these questions needed to be addressed, she added.

Ms. Arbour told reporters that she had been taken aback by the situation of women's rights in the country, including by the Government's "somewhat ambivalent" position regarding female genital mutilation, a serious violation of women's and children's rights. She said she also urged the Government to shore up its anti-corruption mechanisms.

Regarding Liberia, she said the weakest link on the human rights front was the country's "profoundly inadequate" judicial system. She believed it would be very helpful for the Government to be receptive to open up to the idea of allowing regional justices to come into the country and lend a hand.

## Nigeria once more refuses to surrender Taylor to UN-backed court

29 July 2005

17:36 GMT

Agence France Presse

English

ABUJA, July 29 (AFP) --

Nigeria on Friday angrily dismissed a call from Liberia's interim government and regional allies for it to hand former leader and warlord Charles Taylor over to a UN-backed war crimes tribunal.

Earlier the Mano River Union -- a bloc comprising Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea -- had urged President Olusegun Obasanjo to surrender Taylor to the court in Freetown where he stands accused of sponsoring atrocities.

It was the first time that Liberia's caretaker government, which was put in place in August 2003 after Taylor fled to Nigeria, had asked for him to be sent back to face the charges, which relate to Sierra Leone's civil war.

But Obasanjo's spokeswoman Remi Oyo dismissed the call and reiterated Nigeria's long-held position that Taylor would only be surrendered to a democratically elected Liberian government.

"There appears to be a trend towards amnesia, because the international community literally begged Nigeria to give refuge to Mr Taylor after his exit so that the people of Liberia could be spared continued bloodshed," she said.

She said that the decision had been taken "after due consideration with African heads of state, authorities in the US, UK and some European countries" and that it had set Liberia on the path towards democratic elections this year.

"The president has said that the Federal Republic of Nigeria will not be harassed, it certainly will not be intimidated for this decision that it has taken on behalf of the international community, west Africa and Africa.

"Because of that decision, west Africa has become more peaceful that it would have been," she added.

Nigeria won international plaudits in 2003 when, after 14 years of civil war in Liberia, its peacekeeping troops broke the siege of Monrovia and allowed Taylor to make way safely for a UN-sponsored interim regime.

But ever since calls have been mounting for him to hand Taylor over to neighbouring Sierra Leone, which claims that he sponsored a brutal rebel movement during that country's civil war in the 1990s.

On Friday, a statement issued in Freetown and signed by Sierra Leone President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, Liberian transitional chairman Gyude Bryant and Guinean Prime Minister Seyllou Diallo repeated this call.

"We agreed to ask Nigeria to cancel all understandings protecting Taylor, as he continues to threaten peace in the region," the statement said.

UN prosecutors and rights groups have alleged that Taylor has breached the terms of his exile by interfering in Liberian politics and stirring up trouble around the region from his home in the Nigerian city of Calabar.

Oyo insisted that Nigeria had seen no proof of this.



# Herald Sun

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[Print this page](#)

## **Mercy call falls on deaf ears**

Keith Moor  
01aug05

A PHONE call to an African president by Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer has failed to speed up a Victorian policeman's appeal in Sierra Leone.

Peter Halloran believes the decision on his appeal against a sex conviction in Sierra Leone has already been made.

But it is not expected to be announced for at least two months because one of the appeal judges refused to break his holiday to sign the paperwork.

Two of the three judges appeared in court on July 20 to deliver the verdict, but were unable to do so because the third judge failed to turn up.

The third judge doesn't need to be in court for the decision to be delivered, but does need sign the documentation.

Mr Downer hoped his call last week to President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leonean would result in the holidaying judge signing so the decision could be handed down last Friday.

But Mr Kabbah told Mr Downer he had limited authority over judicial arrangements.

The decision is now unlikely to be delivered until October because one of the other judges is going overseas during the two-month Sierra Leone court system break.

Diplomatic staff at the British High Commission in Sierra Leone also tried to get the Halloran decision delivered before the courts closed.

But the Chief Justice told them the appeal judges had until October 5 to deliver the verdict and he could not get involved until after then.

Halloran's lawyer, Lex Lasry, QC, said the delay was a substantial injustice.

Mr Lasry, who is chairman of Victoria's Criminal Bar Association, said the decision would have been delivered on July 20 were it not for the insistence of one judge that he not interrupt his holiday.

"With all due respect, that is not a reasonable or valid reason to refrain from participating in the delivery of the judgment," he said.

"A fair and effective criminal justice system should not operate that way. This delay will have a significant effect on our client, who has been caught up in this unhappy saga since June 2004.

"He is now trapped and isolated in Sierra Leone, and unable to move forward with his life while having suffered the dramatic effect on his career that this ill-considered case has caused him."

Halloran, 57, has been on bail since soon after being convicted in February.

The trial judge withdrew two of three sex charges laid against Halloran after ruling there was no case to answer, but jailed him for 18 months on the remaining charge of indecently assaulting a teenage girl.

Halloran, a superintendent, is on unpaid leave from Victoria Police after accepting a job as commander of war crimes investigations at the UN-backed Special Court in Sierra Leone.

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 31 July 2005**

*[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]*

**International Clips on Liberia****Liberia, neighbors seek Taylor's extradition**

LAGOS, 30 Jul, 2005 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- Liberia and its neighbors, Sierra Leone and Guinea, are asking Nigeria to hand over former Liberian president Charles Taylor to a UN-backed war crimes court in Sierra Leone.

The leaders of the three countries said Taylor violated an agreement that allowed him to leave for Nigeria in 2003 to end Liberia's 14-year-long bloody civil war and continued to meddle in the affairs in the region.

The request came after Liberian interim leader Gyude Bryant, Sierra Leone's President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and Guinean Prime Minister Cellou Diallo held a closed-door meeting in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown Friday.

**Sufficient grounds avail to review Taylor's asylum status: Liberian official**

MONROVIA, 30 Jul, 2005 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- Liberia's Minister of Information William Allen said Saturday that there were sufficient grounds to review former Liberian president Charles Taylor's asylum in Nigeria.

"There are sufficient grounds to suggest to ECOWAS to review the asylum status of exiled former President Charles Taylor," Allen said in an interview with Xinhua.

**International Clips on West Africa****Ivory Coast disarmament process faces new delay**

ABIDJAN, 31 Jul (AFP) - Ivory Coast loyalist and rebel military commanders were deadlocked Sunday over the number of sites to be used for a disarmament operation in the divided west African state, putting the long-overdue program at risk of yet another delay.

By midday there had been no instructions handed down for the loyalist troops to begin moving towards the cantonment sites, although the process was scheduled to start on Sunday, a senior military official said in Abidjan.

**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 30 July 2005**

*[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]*

**International Clips on Liberia**

UN News Service  
29 Jul 2005

**Annan appoints expert panel to probe impact of sanctions in Liberia**

Secretary-General Kofi Annan today appointed a five-member panel of experts to go to Liberia to assess the implementation and impact of the United Nations Security Council's sanctions regime imposed on the war-devastated country, which includes a ban on timber exports in addition to existing travel, arms and diamond embargoes.

The panel is charged specifically with looking into restrictions on the diamond trade and the timber industry. It will also assess the impact these measures on the local population, and check into the implementation of an arms embargo.

**International Clips on West Africa****Ivory Coast disarmament to start Sunday, says commissioner**

ABIDJAN, July 30 (AFP) - Ivory Coast's disarmament chairman Alain Donwahi said he was confident a postponed operation to begin demobilizing rebel fighters would begin as planned Sunday, in an interview with the state-run daily *Fraternite Matin*.

Donwahi, who along with the state-run commission has come under fire from international partners including the World Bank for "insufficient preparation" for the process to disarm some 50,000 fighters, told the daily in an interview out Saturday that the start date of July 31 was set "until proven otherwise".

"Military chiefs from both the loyalist and rebel forces have validated and adopted a calendar, and they will stick to it," Donwahi was quoted as saying about an accord signed July 9 that set Sunday as the date to begin demobilizing an estimated 42,500 rebels and 5,500 loyalists. "The cantonment stage is pretty long, and could last up to six weeks," Donwahi said, ahead of an anticipated September 19 start date for the actual handover of weapons.

*Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board and would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Ms. Kadiatu Konteh at [kontehk@un.org](mailto:kontehk@un.org).*

**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 29 July 2005**

*[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]*

**International Clips on Liberia****Backed by neighbors, Liberia requests Taylor handover to Sierra Leone war court**

MONROVIA, July 29 (AFP) - Liberia on Friday made its first formal request for former president Charles Taylor to be extradited from Nigeria and stand trial for war crimes at a UN-backed court in neighboring Sierra Leone.

The request followed a day-long summit of the Mano River Union of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, and comes as pressure mounts from international and African rights watchdogs for Taylor to face justice. "We will ask Nigeria to lift the immunity that is keeping Charles Taylor under Nigerian government protection," said a statement from the government of Liberia on behalf of the West African neighbors.

**Local Media – Newspapers****Mano River Union Leaders to Call for Review of Taylor's Asylum Status**

*(The Inquirer)*

- The heads of state of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea have ended a special summit in Freetown, Sierra Leone where they agreed to suggest to the Nigerian government to review Taylor's terms of exile or refer the matter to the heads of state of the Economy Community of West African States for further consideration.
- Amid reports that Taylor was involved in the 19 January assassination attempt on President Lansana Conte, his alleged involvement with the gathering of armed people in the forest of Liberia and telephone calls to high-level government officials in Liberia, the communiqué said a review of Mr. Taylor's stay in Nigeria would be timely.

**Local Media – Radio**

**RADIO VERITAS** *(News monitored today at 06:45)*

**Mano River Union Leaders to Call for Review of Taylor's Asylum Status**

- The heads of state of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea have ended a special summit in Freetown, Sierra Leone where they agreed to suggest to the Nigerian government a review" Taylor's terms of exile or refer the matter to the Economic Community of West African States heads of state for further consideration.

*(Also reported on ELBS Radio)*

## Cocorioko website

[http://www.cocorioko.com/news\\_plus](http://www.cocorioko.com/news_plus)

### SLPP COVENTION MAY BE AFFECTED BY HINGA NORMAN LAW SUIT

Sunday July 31, 2005

Rev. Alfred Samforay of the Committee To Elect Hinga Norman has speculated that the oncoming SLPP Convention next month may not be held after all.

The convention has been scheduled for August 18-20 in Makeni, headquarter town of the Northern Province, but chief Hinga Norman has filed a law suit in the Supreme Court against the ruling SLPP for allegedly violating the party's constitution. READ SAMFORAY'S STATEMENT BELOW :

In the matter of Hon. Samuel Hinga Norman, JP (Plaintiff) versus the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) presently before the Sierra Leone Supreme Court, we have reason to believe that there may not be a Party Convention after all. As a result of the law suite filed on behalf of Chief Hinga Norman as we reported recently, it is more likely than not that the High Court will suspend the Party Convention slated for August 18 - 20 in Makeni.

In any case, the court will take up arguments as to the legality of the party convention which Mr. Norman alleges has been manipulated to allow only one convention to elect both the party officials as well as the Party Leader contrary to the party's constitution. Not so fast, Mr. Norman's lawyers have told the SLPP and the court will take up the issue as early as Monday August 1.

We will fill in the blanks for you as soon as the legal documents arrive in the US. So just in case you are packing your suitcase to head for Makeni for the convention, you may want to stay tuned before heading out. You may be the only one in Makeni come August 18.

Meanwhile, we are happy to announce that Mr. Mustapha Vonu has been elected Regional Chairman, Western Region, for the Committee to Elect Hinga Norman. Also former CDF Administrator and SLPP Secretary General, Kenema District, Mr. Arthur Koroma, has been elected Eastern Regional Chairman, Committee to Elect Hinga Norman. Our congratulations to Mr. Vonu and Mr. Koroma. We are also highly encouraged by the Hon. Morie Ngobah, MP, for his leadership role in the House of Representatives on behalf of Chief Hinga Norman and the CDF indictees.

A. SamForay  
Committee to Elect Hinga Norman.

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## Drugs, gems and militants draw FBI to West Africa

Fri Jul 29, 2005 3:38 PM GMT

By Nick Tattersall

DAKAR (Reuters) - The FBI plans to open two offices in West Africa early next year, a region where South American drug cartels, international diamond smugglers and Islamic extremists are all thought to be operating.

The U.S. law enforcement agency, one of whose main priorities is protecting the United States from terrorist attacks, will set up offices in Senegal's capital Dakar and one in Freetown, Sierra Leone, an FBI spokesman in Washington said.

Security analysts say the main concerns in the vast region are pockets of Islamic militants in and around the Sahara desert and organised crime groups dealing in drugs, human trafficking and money laundering along the West African coast.

"The failure by some states in the region to enforce law and order coupled with a culture of impunity facilitates criminal transactions," Antonio Mazzitelli, head of the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime in West and Central Africa, told Reuters.

"These conditions can easily be exploited by terrorist groups looking for safe havens and logistics bases," he said.

One of Washington's main fears in the Sahel region, the arid band of savannah on the Sahara's southern fringe, is the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), an Algerian militant group which has pledged allegiance to al Qaeda.

The GSPC, created in 1998 to overthrow the ruling authorities in Algeria and set up a purist Islamic state, is increasingly setting its sights on foreign targets after being weakened by security forces in its homeland, analysts say.

"They certainly have an anti-Western focus and they are in western Europe and sharing ideologies with al Qaeda," said Sara Daly, an analyst at the RAND Corporation which conducts studies on a range of issues for the Pentagon.

Christophe Chaboud, head of the French Anti-Terrorism Coordination Unit, told Le Monde this month the GSPC had asked Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, head of al Qaeda's Iraq wing, for support and that the group posed a direct threat to France.

"They are trying to develop regionally, in sub-Saharan Africa, but also in France. Any wish to externalise jihad on their part risks materialising on our territory," he said.

### TERRORIST FUNDING

The FBI, which already has offices in Nigeria and Morocco, said the operations in Dakar and Freetown would be "legal attache offices", generally based in U.S. embassies or consulates around the world to help fight international crime.

Some analysts say countries in West Africa exaggerate the terrorist threat to gain support from Western powers.

While U.S. and other officials say evidence is hard to find, they fear terrorists could be using diamonds -- readily available in countries destabilised by conflict such as Sierra Leone -- as a means of storing and moving funds.

War crimes prosecutors at Sierra Leone's special court have said top al Qaeda members bought diamonds in the region ahead of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States.

A court document prepared by prosecutors and seen by Reuters last August said several of those on the FBI's "Most Wanted Terrorist List" had been in Liberia, including Mohammed Atef, or Abu Hafs al Masri, an aide to al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden killed in Afghanistan.

West Africa is also growing as a major transit centre for the narcotics trade, with South American cocaine cartels moving their logistics bases to the region, attracted by small local criminal networks which have proved hard to detect, experts say.

"In the underworld each group, independently of its final objective, cooperates with others unless they are in competition," the U.N's Mazzitelli said.

"There's no competition between criminal groups looking for profit and terrorist groups looking for destabilisation," he said, pointing out that bomb attacks which killed 191 people in packed rush hour trains in Spain in March 2004 had been at least partly funded by drug trafficking.

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Mano River Union communique (excerpt)  
28 July 2005



During the Summit the Heads of State exchanged views especially with regards to some of the alleged activities of Charles Taylor in Liberia and in the sub-region.

Whilst the Heads of State appreciate the decision of ECOWAS and the gesture of His Excellency President Obasanjo and other Heads of State in the African Union to grant temporary stay to Charles Taylor in Nigeria, they believe that some of his alleged activities may be in breach of his terms of stay in Nigeria.

Some of the allegations against him include his involvement in the 19th January 2005 assassination attempt on President Lansana Conte in Conakry, his alleged involvement with the gathering of armed people in the forest areas of Liberia and telephone calls to high level Government officials in Liberia.


In the light of the views exchanged, the Summit agreed to suggest to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that there may now be need for a review of the terms of the temporary stay granted to Charles Taylor or a referral by the Government of the



Federal Republic of Nigeria of the matter to ECOWAS Heads of State for further consideration.

The Heads of State of the Republics of Guinea and Liberia commended the initiative taken by His Excellency Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, to host this very important Summit and for the warm hospitality and excellent facilities provided during their stay in Freetown.

**DONE IN FREETOWN, ON THURSDAY TWENTY EIGHTH DAY OF JULY, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD TWO THOUSAND AND FIVE.**

  
His Excellency **ALHAJI DR. AHMAD TEJAN KABBAH**  
For the Republic of Sierra Leone

  
Mr. **CELLOU DALEIN DIALLO**  
For the Republic of Guinea

  
His Excellency **CHARLES GYUDE BRYANT**  
For the Republic of Liberia